

Melilots in Edinburgh / Lothians

• There are three main Melilots in the region: Ribbed, Golden/Tall, and Small. These are shown first in comparison since they have yellow flowers. A fourth, White Melilot, can sometimes be encountered, and is given at the end. There is a single recording of Furrowed Melilot, which receives a mention in yellowed-flowered section.

• When you encounter a melilot, try to find the seed pods, unripe or ripe, as the pods will most readily tell you the species (as shown in pictures below). If you cannot find pods, you will need to use flower size (small -> Small Melilot) or relative sizing of the petals; the latter is awkward but if you press the petals together (as illustrated under Golden Melilot) you will see the relative sizes; remember to try enough samples until you are satisfied.

NB : Never assume neighbouring plants are the same species - you may have Golden and Ribbed Melilot side-by-side but looking rather similar!

Ribbed	Golden/Tall	Small
Melilotus officinalis	Melilotus altissimus	Melilotus indicus
Common (not hills)	Commonish (not hills)	Occasional (not hills)
Waste ground	Waste ground	

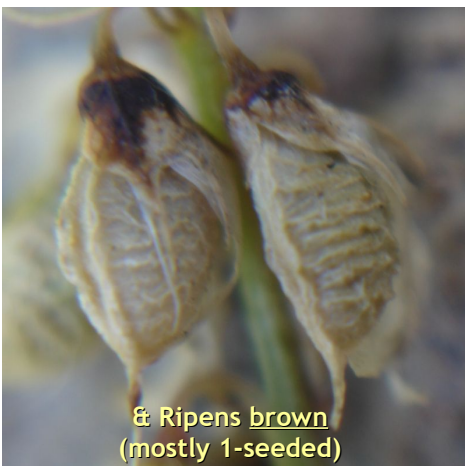
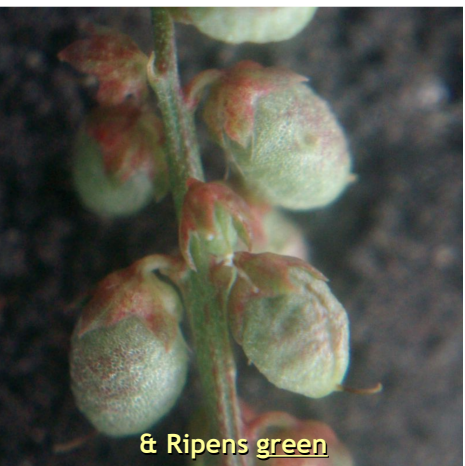
Plant

• Although the first two can grow tall, they may of course often be found as small forms!



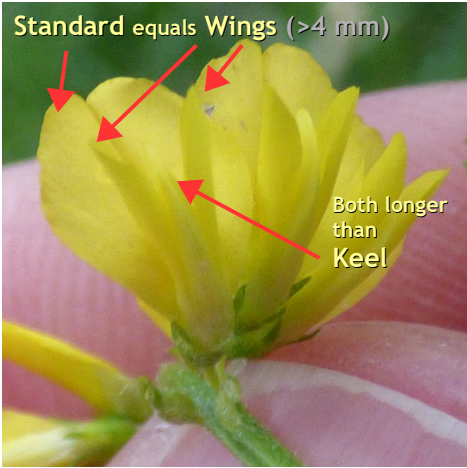
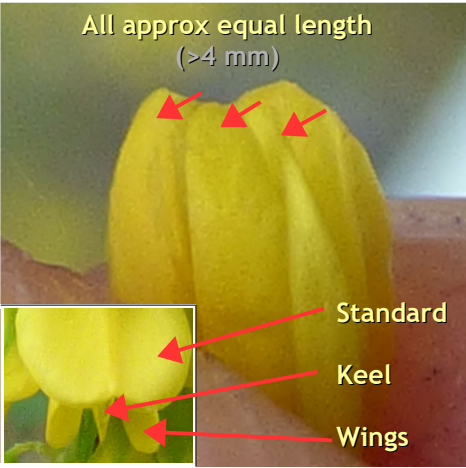
Pods

- Look for any pods first of all!

Ribbed	Golden/Tall	Small
 Ringed + hairless (> 3mm)	 Unringed + Hairy (zoom in) (> 3mm)	 Small (<3mm) Ripens green
 & Ripens brown (mostly 1-seeded)	 & Ripens black (mostly 2-seeded)	 & Ripens green
	Furrowed Melilot Here the ringed ridges are much more pronounced and of varying orientation. <-- Photo from Wikipedia.	

Petals

- In the absence of fruit, petal lengths can instead be used - squeeze the petals together to see how they compare, and measure them (do for a number). When you are familiar with Small Melilot you will automatically recognise at a glance how small its flowers are. Because they're all the same colour it can be tricky to capture them satisfactorily in a photograph.
- Terminology - Standard = large upper petal, Keel = lower petal, Wings = two side petals

Ribbed	Golden/Tall	Small
		
Furrowed Melilot Wings shorter than Keel		

Leaves

- Leaves are variable, but included here for completeness.



White Melilot

White Melilot - A rare wasteland casual seen from time to time - *Melilotus albus*



Info

Updated : 2019-04-07 - please check you have the latest version!

Contact : David Merrick - [facebook.com/meteorquake](https://www.facebook.com/meteorquake)

Facebook Botany Group for Lothians : [facebook.com/groups/lothiansbotany](https://www.facebook.com/groups/lothiansbotany)

All items in this Series : paintdrawer.co.uk/nature/edinburgh/downloads.htm